

REMARKS

Applicant submits this Amendment, accompanied by an Appendix to Amendment Dated November 4, 2002, a Request for Continued Examination, and a Petition for Extension of Time, in reply to the Final Office Action mailed May 13, 2002.

In this Amendment, Applicant proposes to amend claims 43, 59, and 60 to better define the claimed invention and to improve clarity.

Before entry of this Amendment, claims 43-60 were pending in this application. After entry of this Amendment, claims 43-60 remain pending in this application.

The originally-filed specification, claims, abstract, and drawings fully support the amendments to claims 43, 59, and 60. No new matter was introduced.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 43, 59, and 60 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,419,384 to Iseki ("Iseki") or U.S. Patent No. 3,826,297 to Alderfer ("Alderfer"); rejected claims 43-49 and 56-60 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 3,240,250 to Frazier ("Frazier"); rejected claims 52-55 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Frazier; rejected claims 43, 48, and 50-60 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over European Patent Application No. 0,928,702 ("EP '702"); and rejected claims 43, 48, and 50-60 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,328,084 ("the '084 patent").

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Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Applicant submits that the amendments to claims 43, 59, and 60 resolve the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(a), 102(b), 102(e), and 103(a).

Claim Scope

In discussing the specification, claims, abstract, and drawings in this Amendment, it is to be understood that Applicant is in no way intending to limit the scope of the claims to any exemplary embodiments described in the specification or abstract and/or shown in the drawings. Rather, Applicant believes that Applicant is entitled to have the claims interpreted broadly, to the maximum extent permitted by statute, regulation, and applicable case law.


Summary

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the reconsideration and reexamination of this Application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 
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Dated: November 4, 2002

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